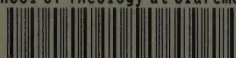


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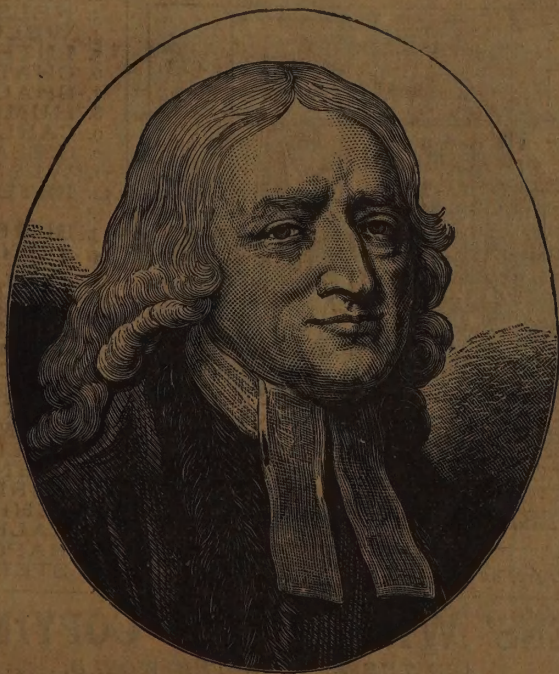
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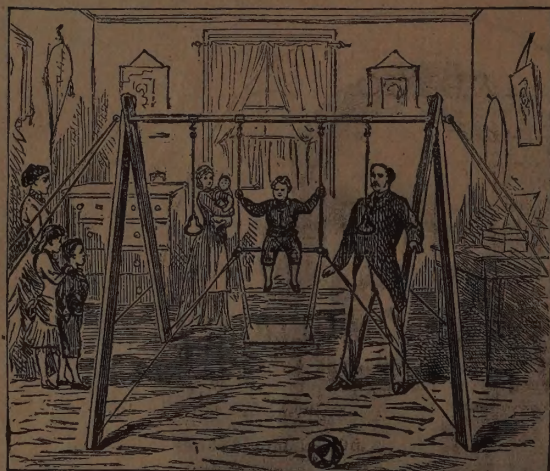
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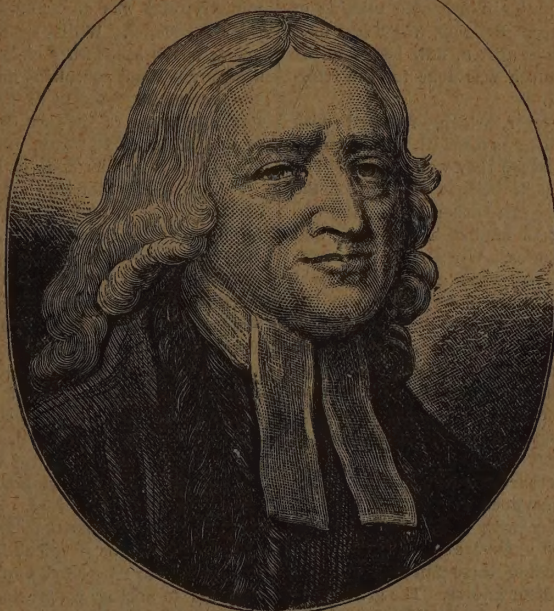
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JOHN WESLEY,  
THE FOUNDER OF WESLEYAN METHODISM.

CONTENTS.

The Religious Condition of England before Wesley's Time—The Wesley Family—Wesley's Birth and Early Life—Religious Life at Oxford—On a Mission to Georgia—The General who Never Forgave—Changed Times—A Young Lady in the Case—In England again—The Conversion of Wesley—Preaching with Diligence—Extraordinary Manifestations—In Various Parts of England—Rules for the Societies—Separation from Whitfield—Wesleyan Free Grace—Growing in Numbers—The Death of Wesley's Mother—A School on New Principles—An Unfortunate Marriage—Dangerous Illness—In England, Scotland, and Ireland—The Approaching End—Wesley's Death—Wesley's Work and Character.

THE RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF ENGLAND  
BEFORE WESLEY'S TIME.

**T**HE subject of the following biography is universally allowed to have been an extraordinary man. His long life, spent in great and uninterrupted labours, and his success as a minister of the Gospel in this and other countries, mark him

out as one the events of whose career should be familiar to all of us.

That we may the better understand the life of John Wesley, it will be as well that we should glance at the religious condition of England for some little time previous to his appearance on the scene. When James II. had lost his



crown, his successor, William, as he owed much to the Puritan party, secured to them, by the Act of Toleration, the inestimable blessing of liberty of conscience. Religion, which had long been in a drooping condition, now began to lift up her head, and much was done for the reformation of the land.

The wars, however, which followed with Louis XIV. of France reduced things to pretty much the state in which they were before. The Duke of Marlborough became the god of the people, and nothing was spoken of, nothing was hardly even thought of, but his amazing and uninterrupted victories. When peace was established, attention was again given to spiritual concerns, and much was done to prepare the way for the great revival of religion in which Wesley played so prominent a part. The societies for the reformation of manners, which received the support of the Government, and various private societies formed throughout the kingdom, undoubtedly gave a check to the practical atheism and perfect looseness of morals which had so entirely pervaded the whole land. Many of these societies remained in existence in 1738, and received Wesley with open arms when he entered on his most extensive sphere of action.

Yet, notwithstanding these fair appearances, true religion was little known. The great leading truths of the Gospel, the justification of the sinner by faith alone in the merits of Christ, communion with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, the assurance of the favour of God, and even the doctrine of original sin, were not credited—or, at least, not enforced—by the clergy of the Establishment in general.

Nor were the Dissenters in a much better condition. The piety, the zeal, the readiness to do and suffer for the will of God, which so distinguished multitudes of the ancient Puritans, had almost disappeared. Arianism and Socinianism gained ground, and few of their ministers pressed home on the consciences of their hearers the grand truths of religion. None of them held forth the assurance of faith as the privilege of all believers, though some of them allowed it to be the privilege of a few. Communion with God and crucifixion to the world were parts of religion hardly thought of in those days. Such was the state of Christianity in England when John Wesley entered his great sphere of action.

#### THE WESLEY FAMILY.

The grandfather of John Wesley by his father's side was a Nonconformist, who had involved himself in the affairs of the civil war during the

reign of Charles I. His son, Samuel Wesley, was designed by his father for the Dissenting ministry, and was accordingly sent to one of their academies. While he resided there the young man's sentiments changed; he left the academy without consulting any of his relations, and entered as a student at Exeter College, Oxford. In course of time we find him presented to the living of Epworth, and also to that of Wroote, both in the county of Lincoln.

Samuel Wesley married the youngest daughter of Dr. Samuel Annesley, a celebrated Nonconformist. She was remarkable for possessing not only the graces of her own sex, but the wisdom and fortitude of the other. She was indeed a helpmeet for her pious and laborious husband. She bore him nineteen children; and though she charged herself with the early education of them all, and was most of the time in very straitened circumstances, yet several of her letters abundantly prove that she did not neglect the improvement of her own mind.

The eldest son was called Samuel, after his father. Concerning his childhood there is something very remarkable told. He did not speak at all till he was more than four years old, and was thought to be deficient in understanding. But he one day answered a question which was proposed to another concerning him, in such a way as greatly surprised all that were present; and from that time he spoke without any difficulty.

Charles Wesley, the third son, was born at Epworth, in 1708. He received part of his education at Westminster, and was afterwards admitted as a student of Christ Church College, Oxford, where he took the degree of Master of Arts. He was a good scholar, and at an early age began to display those poetic talents which afterwards shone with such peculiar lustre. He wrote short hymns on most of the remarkable passages of the Old and New Testament, and very largely on some parts of both. His Hymns and Sacred Poems are an invaluable treasure.

As a preacher, he was mighty in the Scriptures, and possessed a remarkable talent of uttering the most striking truths with simplicity, force, and brevity. For some years after he left the University he chiefly travelled with his brother, and shared in all his labours and dangers. He then married a lady of considerable family in Wales, and after his marriage divided his ministry almost entirely between London and Bristol, and was rendered useful in the conversion and spiritual profit of many in those cities.



## JOHN WESLEY'S BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE.

John Wesley, the second son of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, the subject of our narrative, was born on the 17th of June (Old Style), 1703. Of his mere childhood nothing very material has reached us, except a remarkable deliverance from fire when he was about six years of age. He remembered this event ever after with the most lively gratitude, and more than once introduced it into his writings.

He seems to have been impressed with sentiments of religion at a very early age, and partook of the Lord's Supper when he was only eight years old. Shortly after this he was placed at the Charterhouse in London, under a well-known scholar, Dr. Walker, with whom he soon became a favourite, on account of his steady application. He always retained a liking for the Charterhouse, and used to walk through it once a year, during his annual visit to London.

He had some reason, however, to complain of the usage he received at the Charterhouse. Discipline was so exceedingly relaxed that the boys of the higher forms were suffered to eat up, not only their own portions of animal food, but those, also, which were allowed the lesser boys. By this means he was limited, for a considerable part of the time he remained at that school, to a small daily portion of bread as his only solid food. One thing he observed, as contributing among others to his general flow of health, and to the establishment of his constitution, was his invariable attention to a strict command of his father, that he should run round the Charterhouse garden, which was of considerable extent, three times every morning.

From the Charterhouse he was removed to Christ Church College, Oxford, where he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts. In the year 1724 he was elected Fellow of Lincoln College, and two years after this he took his degree of Master of Arts.

He now became conspicuous as a scholar. Nor was he barely acquainted with the learned languages; he read them as a critic, and relished all their beauties. His poetic abilities were not inconsiderable, but he did not cultivate them much after he left the University. He looked upon himself as called to other work, and he was soon so fully employed therein that he was obliged wholly to give up the writing of poetry.

About the time of his removal to Lincoln College, he was deeply impressed with thoughts of eternity, and often mentioned his election to his fellowship as a happy event. It

enabled him, he said, to cast off all those of his acquaintance whose conversation he found injurious to him in respect to religion.

Wesley was ordained in 1725, by Dr. Potter, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, and preached his first sermon at South Lye, near Oxford. Soon after his election to a fellowship, he was appointed Greek Lecturer and Moderator of the Classes. He was now fully employed between his public offices and his pupils. With the latter, he took the greatest care, accounting himself not only responsible for them to their parents and the community, but to God.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE AT OXFORD.

His religious views and impressions now deepened, but he seems to have kept his thoughts much to himself. At last some one happened to say to him, "You wish to serve God and go to heaven, do you? You cannot serve Him alone. You must therefore *find* companions or *make* them,—the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." Wesley never forgot this. He first spoke to his brother Charles, and afterwards to several others, including the afterwards famous Whitfield. When these friends first began to meet, they read divinity on Sunday evenings, and on other nights Greek and Latin classics. The following summer they began to visit the prisoners in the castle, and the sick poor in the town.

The meetings now began to be more directly religious: they read and considered the Greek Testament on the week evenings, and conversed closely and deeply on the things of God. They now likewise observed the fasts of the ancient Church every Wednesday and Friday, and communicated once a week. "We were now," says Wesley, "about fifteen in number, all of one heart and of one mind."

Being so strict in their deportment, so constant in the means of grace, and zealous of good works, they soon began to be noticed and ridiculed by the young men of the University, under the appellations of Sacramentarians, and the Godly Club, and afterwards of Methodists. This last title was given them in allusion to an ancient college of physicians at Rome, who were remarkable for putting their patients under regimen, and were therefore called Methodists.

During the latter part of Wesley's residence at Oxford, both he and his brother Charles kept up a close intimacy with a Mr. Law. Twice or thrice in the year they travelled about sixty miles *on foot* (that they might save the more money for the poor), in order to visit him; and



his conversation was undoubtedly rendered very useful to them. One time Mr. Law observed to John Wesley, "You would have a philosophical religion, but there can be no such thing. Religion is the most plain, simple thing in the world. It is only 'We love Him because He first loved us.'" This remark, Wesley often observed, made a deep impression upon him.

Wesley having occasionally assisted his father at Epworth, the old man, finding his health on the decline, wished that his son should succeed him, and pressed him with great earnestness to make interest for the next presentation. But he was then so wedded to a college life, and to the advantage he enjoyed in his retirement and chosen companions at Oxford, that he could not be persuaded to consent.

#### AS A MISSIONARY TO GEORGIA.

We come now to a more important part of Wesley's life than we have yet considered. It will have been seen that his mind was deeply impressed with religious sentiments. He had devoted himself entirely to God, and had deeply imbibed that undisturbed love of retirement which good men have felt more or less in all ages of the Church. But this was not all. He was at that time an admirer of the mystic writers; and though he had not embraced the peculiar sentiments of those who were grossly unscriptural, yet he still believed many of them to be, to use his own words, "the best explainers of the Gospel of Christ." And every one knows, as he has remarked, how continually those that are supposed to be the purest of them cry out, "To the desert! to the desert!"

What wonder then if at this time he should close with a proposal, which seemed at one stroke to cut him off from the world, and enable him to be dead to it and crucified with Christ? This is the account which he himself gives of his views and motives at this period. When he consented to go as a missionary to Georgia, his ruling idea was to separate himself from the world.

In the spring of 1735, he was called to attend his dying father, who desired him to present to Queen Caroline a book he had just finished. Soon after, he went for this purpose to London, where he was strongly urged by Dr. Burton, one of the trustees for the new colony at Georgia, to go there and preach to the Indians. To this he would not at first agree, but many providential incidents, afterwards concurred which at last induced him to alter his resolution. The chief of these respected his mother. When many objections he made were answered, and some

difficulties which he started were removed, he mentioned the grief it might give his mother. "I am," says he, "the staff of her age, her chief support and comfort." It was asked in reply, "Will you go if your mother's consent can be obtained?" This he thought impossible; however, he permitted the trial, settling it in his heart that if she were willing he would receive it as the call of God. Her answer was worthy of the mother and the son. "Had I," said she, "twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." His way was now plain, and he made no delay in fulfilling what he thought to be the will of God.

He was not allowed to depart without many earnest remonstrances from his friends, some of whom thought the mission to the Indians slightly Quixotic. To one who expostulated with him he wrote his reasons at length, and speaking of his hope of doing good to the heathen, he remarks that he should there have the advantage of preaching to a people not yet *beguiled by philosophy and vain deceit*; and of enforcing the plain truth of God without its being softened and rendered useless by the comments of men.

On the 14th of October, 1735, he left London for Gravesend, accompanied by two friends and his brother Charles, in order to embark for Georgia. "Our end," he says, "in leaving our native country was not to avoid want (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings), nor to gain the dross of riches and honour, but simply this—to save our souls."

There were twenty-six Germans on board, members of the Moravian Church, with whom they grew intimate. The lively victorious faith which Wesley perceived in some of these fellow-passengers convinced him that he was still very little acquainted with experimental religion.

A circumstance occurred in the course of the voyage well worth relating. Wesley one day heard an unusual noise in the cabin of General Oglethorpe, the Governor of Georgia, with whom he sailed. He stepped in to enquire the cause, when the General immediately addressed him: "Mr. Wesley, you must excuse me, I have met with a provocation too great for man to bear." He explained how his servant had stolen some of his wine, "but," added he, "I will be revenged on him. I have ordered him to be tied hand and foot, and carried to the man-of-war that sails with us. The scoundrel should have taken care how he used me so, for *I never forgive*." "Then I hope," said Wesley, looking calmly at him, "that *you never sin*." The General was



quite confounded at the reproof, and putting his hand in his pocket, took out a bunch of keys, which he threw to the servant, saying, "There, take the keys, and behave better in future."

On the 5th of February they arrived in Savannah River, in Georgia. On the 7th of the following month he entered on his ministry at Savannah by preaching on the epistle for the day. He did not find, however, an open door for the prosecution of the great design which induced him to visit America—the conversion of the Indians—so he and his companions occupied themselves with the interests of the little flock at Savannah.

The inconveniences and dangers which he readily embraced at this time that he might preach the Gospel, were such as few but himself would have submitted to. He exposed himself to the inclemency of the weather, he frequently slept on the ground as he journeyed through the wood, covered with nightly dew, and with his clothes and hair frozen by morning to the earth. He would wade through swamps, and swim over rivers, and then travel till his clothes were dry. His health, in the meantime, strange as it may appear, was almost uninterrupted.

#### CHANGED TIMES

At first he seems to have enjoyed a large share of honour and respect, but some dislike at last began to appear in several persons to his rigid attachment to all the parts of the rubric of the Church of England. High Church principles continually influenced his conduct, an instance of which was his refusing to admit one of the best men in the province to the Lord's Supper because he was a Dissenter, unless he would submit to be re-baptized! But this appeared to him his duty; and in that case, till God taught him better, it was vain to attempt to move him. Reflecting on this zeal at a future period, he remarks, "Have I not been finely beaten with my own staff?"

Things grew more and more unfavourable to his continuance in America. Observing one day a coldness in the behaviour of a friend, he asked him the reason. He answered: "I like nothing you do; all your sermons are satires upon particular persons; therefore I will never hear you more. And all the people are of my mind, for we will not hear ourselves abused. Besides, they say they are Protestants. But as for you, they cannot tell what religion you are of. They never heard of such a religion before. And then your private behaviour,—all the quarrels that

have been here since you came have been owing to you."

In addition to all this there was a lady in the case, whom Wesley had regarded for a short time "with more than ordinary complacency," but whom in the end he had repelled from the Holy Communion. Her friends presented a bill against him before the grand jury of the colony.

Wesley now consulted his friends whether God did not call him to return to England. "The reason," he observes, "for which I left it had now no force, there being no possibility as yet of instructing the Indians; neither had I as yet found or heard of any Indians on the continent of America who had the least desire of being instructed." His friends ended by advising him to go.

On the 2nd of December, 1737, he proposed to set out for Carolina about noon, the tide then serving. The magistrates, however, published an order, requiring their officers to prevent his going out of the province, and forbidding any person to assist him in so doing. Wesley now saw clearly that the hour for leaving the place was come. As soon as evening prayers were over, the tide then serving, he shook the dust off his feet and left Georgia, after having preached the Gospel there ("not," says he, "as I ought, but as I was able") one year and nearly nine months.

#### IN ENGLAND AGAIN.

At Charleston Wesley embarked for England, and on the 1st February, 1738, he landed at Deal, where he learned that Whitfield had sailed the day before for America to assist him.

On reaching London he was invited to preach in several of the churches. He now began to be popular, appearing in a new character, as a missionary lately returned from preaching the Gospel to the Indians in America. The churches where he preached were crowded. This soon produced a complaint that there was not room "for the best in the parish," and this objection, united to the offence given by his plain, heart-searching sermons, prevented his being asked in many a case to preach a second time.

About this time Wesley met some members of the Moravian Church, who had just landed from Germany, and from them he derived much spiritual benefit. He now went to see his brother Samuel and some other friends, and we find him renewing and writing down the following resolutions with respect to his own behaviour.

1. To use absolute openness and unreserve with all he should converse with.
2. To labour after continual seriousness, not



willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter, no, not for a moment.

3. To speak no word which did not tend to the glory of God; in particular not a tittle of worldly things. "Others may," said he,—"nay must. But what is that to me?"

4. To take no pleasure which did not tend to the glory of God; thanking God every moment for all he took, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it which he felt he could not so thank Him in and for.

Influenced by conversations with a Moravian friend, Peter Bohler, he felt an inclination to leave off preaching. "How," thought he, "can I preach to others who have not faith myself?" He asked his friend whether he should leave it off or not. "By no means," said Bohler; "preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it, you will preach faith."

#### THE CONVERSION OF WESLEY.

Now comes what is known as the conversion of Wesley. It is a point of such importance that we shall give it entirely in his own words.

"On my return to England, in the beginning of 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true living faith was the *one thing needful* for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object. I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was *wholly void of this faith*, and only thought I *had not enough* of it. So that when Peter Bohler, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to London, affirmed of true faith in Christ (which is but one) that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, 'dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,' I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new gospel. If this was so, it was clear I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove that faith might be where these were not; especially where the sense of forgiveness was not; for all the Scriptures relating to this I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all Presbyterians who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw no one could (in the nature of things) have such a sense of forgiveness and not *feel* it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

"When I met Peter Bohler again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired,—viz., Scripture and Experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavouring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, 'that experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those Scriptures.' Nor could I therefore allow it to be true till I found some living witnesses of it.

"He replied, 'he could show me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day.' And accordingly, the next day he came again with three others, all of whom testified of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past and freedom from all present sins. They added, with one mouth, that this faith was the gift, the free gift, of God, and that He would surely bestow it upon every soul who earnestly and perseveringly sought it.

"I was now thoroughly convinced, and by the grace of God I resolved to seek it unto the end; (1) By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon my own works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up; (2) By adding to the constant use of all the other means of grace continual prayer for this very thing,—justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me*; a trust in Him, as *my Christ*, as *my* sole justification, sanctification, and redemption.

"I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indifference, dulness, and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24th. I think it was about five this morning that I opened my Testament on these words, 'There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.' Just as I went out I opened it again on these words, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.'

"In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The anthem was: 'Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice, and let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with Thee, therefore Thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.'



"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my breast strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

Such was the turning-point in Wesley's spiritual state. As soon as he was thus enabled to love God, he loved every child of man. "Immediately," says he, "I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitely used me and persecuted me." And in this thankful, loving, happy frame of mind, he continued believing in God, and zealous of good works.

He now declared, as he had never done before, the lovingkindness of God. He also experienced what it was to be weak in this faith, as well as afterwards to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. He was often cast down by temptations. Sometimes fear came suddenly upon him,—fear that he had deceived himself and stopped short of that grace of God which he had sought for. At other times, letters which he received from injudicious persons concerning the new birth and the fruits of Christian faith greatly troubled him. Few helped, and many, in most cases, ignorantly strove to hinder him.

Exercised thus in mind, he made a journey through Holland and Germany, where he conversed with and was hospitably entertained by many who were happy partakers of the Gospel. On returning to England, he felt himself strengthened to do and suffer whatever might befall him in the prosecution of his great design, the spending his life in testifying to the Gospel of the grace of God.

#### THE DILIGENT PREACHER.

We have now followed Wesley through his youth and part of his manhood, and are come to that important period in which he became first the contempt and afterwards the wonder of his fellow-countrymen.

His great abstemiousness of living in Georgia, the sudden changes of heat and cold, his fatigues and dangers in travelling through the vast woods of America, all served to prepare him for the unremitted labours which he afterwards endured with the greatest fortitude. The providence of God throughout the whole of his life to this remarkable era of his history, seemed to be

pointing out his way to the great work which we have now to notice.

On Saturday, the 17th September, 1738, he arrived in London. It was still his desire to preach in a church rather than in any other place. But this he seldom could do. The same obstructions were in the way that had before shut the doors of many of the churches against him—rather the offence was now increased. The people flocked to hear him more than ever. Salvation by faith, which he now preached everywhere with zeal, though a principal doctrine of the Church of England, was little understood and less approved. But Providence afforded him the means of testifying the Gospel. A little society which he had formed of those like-minded with himself, as he and his pious companions had before done at Oxford, had now increased to thirty-two persons, and many other religious communities in various parts of the town received him gladly. Newgate was not yet shut against him. He made excursions into the country also, visited Oxford, and preached to the prisoners in the castle.

Hearing Whitfield was returned from Georgia, Wesley hastened to meet him, and they once more took sweet counsel together. A few other clergymen now joined them, being convinced that the new doctrine—Methodism, as it had come to be commonly called—was indeed the old doctrine of the Bible and of the Church of England.

#### EXTRAORDINARY MANIFESTATIONS.

We may give an instance of the fervency of this little band of Christian soldiers. Being assembled together with several others on the 1st January, 1739, they continued in prayer till the night was far gone. "About three in the morning," says Wesley, "the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell on the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of His Majesty, we broke out with one voice, 'We praise Thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.'"

In connection with this event, and without committing ourselves in any way to his views, we shall quote the words of one of Wesley's friends and biographers: "To awaken a drowsy, careless world, sunk in sin and sensuality, the Lord was pleased at this time to work in an extraordinary manner. In several places, while Mr. Wesley was expounding the Scriptures, many persons trembled and fell down before him,

Some cried aloud, and others appeared convulsed, as in the agonies of death.

"Many of these were afterwards eminent possessors of the holiness and happiness of religion; and declared that they had at the time above mentioned such a deep sense of the dreadful nature of sin and of the just wages of it, that they were constrained to cry aloud for the quietude of their heart. In others, the change which the Scripture speaks of, as evidencing a true conversion, was not so apparent; while in some, neither godly sorrow for sin, peace or joy in believing, nor any real change of heart and life, followed the impressions which were then made upon them.

"Mr. Wesley at that time maturely compared these appearances of things with the Word of God, and especially with the work of the Spirit of God on the souls of men as described in the Word. He thereby clearly saw that every religious pang, every enthusiastic conceit, must not be taken for true conversion.

"At the same time he perceived, from several passages both of the Old and New Testament, that the operations of the Spirit of God have occasionally produced such lively and powerful actings of the passions of fear, sorrow, joy, and love, as must necessarily have caused at the time considerable agitations of the body. He also knew that several Fathers of the Church in the first three centuries speak often of such a work among the people. . . .

"Yet it is certain that throughout the whole of his life he wished that all things should be done, even in the opinion of men, decently and in order. But he had one only design, which was to bring men to that knowledge and love of God which makes them holy and happy; useful in their lives and peaceful in their death. He therefore thankfully acquiesced in every means which the Lord was pleased to use for the accomplishment of this great end."

#### PREACHING IN VARIOUS PARTS OF ENGLAND.

After preaching in many places he was asked very earnestly by Whitfield to go to Bristol, and thither he went. Whitfield had, a short time before, begun to preach in the fields and highways near Bristol; the religious Societies, which first received him, not being able to provide room for a tenth part of the people who crowded to hear him.

When Wesley arrived he also began to expound in a meeting-house. But he soon took to the open air, and in the highways proclaimed the Gospel, "speaking from a little eminence in a

ground adjoining the city to about three thousand people." Such was the beginning of Wesley's open-air preaching in England.

In the suburbs of Bristol, at Bath, in Kingswood and other places, many who had set all laws, human and divine, at defiance, were converted. Several at Bristol agreed to meet together to edify and strengthen each other according to the example of the Society in London. It was agreed to build a room large enough to contain not only the Society but such also as might desire to be present with them when the Scripture was expounded. On Saturday, the 12th May, 1739, the first stone was laid of this the first Methodist preaching-house.

Wesley now laboured in many places between Bristol and London. In Moorfields, on Kennington Common, and at Blackheath many thousands attended his ministry, and in every place God bore witness to His truth. Very absurd reports were spread concerning Wesley. The most common rumour was that he was a Jesuit, and had evil designs against the Church, if not against the State.

His mother now went regularly to hear him preach, being convinced that he spoke the words of truth and soberness. She had for some time lived with a son-in-law, a Mr. Hall, and by misrepresentations had been led to think that her sons John and Charles were in a dangerous error. Her son Samuel, who was deeply prejudiced against his brother's preaching and behaviour, laments with great surprise, in a letter to his mother written about this time, that "she should countenance the spreading delusion, so far as to be one of Jack's congregation." After this, however, she lived with John Wesley, and attended his ministry till her death.

Wesley was now earnestly pressed to visit Wales, which he did in October of 1739. He preached in many places in the Principality, and though the frost set in and was very severe, multitudes turned out to hear him in the open air, and a great reformation was in many cases effected.

In London he met the little Society of which he formed the head at his preaching-house near Moorfields, generally known as the Foundry, because it had been originally built for the casting of cannon. Here he regularly preached.

#### RULES FOR THE SOCIETIES.

He now saw it necessary to draw up, jointly with his brother, rules for his Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and other parts of the king-



dom They contain as fine a system of Christian ethics as was ever perhaps drawn up in so small a compass, and the reader will thank us for reprinting them here :—

“I. There is one only condition previously required of those who desire admission into these Societies—a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins ; but wherever this is really fixed in the soul it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

“First, by doing no harm, by avoiding evil in every kind, especially that which is most generally practised. Such is

“The taking the name of God in vain :

“The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or buying or selling :

“Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors, or drinking them, except in cases of extreme necessity :

“Fighting, quarrelling, brawling, brother going to law with brother ; returning evil for evil, or railing for railing, the using many words in buying or selling :

“The buying or selling uncustomed goods :

“The giving or taking things on usury : *i.e.*, unlawful interest :

“Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation ; particularly speaking evil of magistrates, or of ministers :

“Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us :

“Doing what we know is not for the glory of God :

“As the putting on of gold or costly apparel :

“The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus :

“The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God :

“Softness, and needless self-indulgence :

“Laying up treasure upon earth :

“Borrowing without a probability of paying, or taking up goods without a probability of paying for them.

“II. It is expected of all who continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

“Secondly, by doing good, by being in every kind merciful after their power, as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as is possible to all men :

“To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing

the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison :

“To their souls, by instructing, reproving, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with ; trampling under foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils—we are not to do good unless our hearts be free to it :

“By doing good especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be ; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business ; and so much the more because the world will love its own and them only :

“By all possible diligence and frugality that the Gospel be not blamed :

“By running with patience the race that is set before them, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily ; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and off-scouring of the world ; and looking that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely for the Lord's sake.

“III. It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

“Thirdly, by attending on all the ordinances of God : such are

“The public worship of God : the ministry of the Word, either read or expounded :

“The supper of the Lord : family and private prayer : searching the Scriptures, and fasting or abstinence.

“These are the general rules of our Societies ; all which we are taught of God to observe, even in His written Word, the only rule and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know His Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart. If there be any among us who observe them not, who habitually break any of them, let it be made known unto them who watch over that soul, as they that must give an account. We will admonish him of the error of his ways : we will bear with him for a season. But then, if he repent not, he hath no more place among us. We have delivered our own souls. (Signed) John Wesley, Charles Wesley.”

#### SEPARATION FROM WHITFIELD.

Wesley now went on with his labours, and with the same success as before. For some time Whitfield continued to labour with him, and sometimes they appeared in the pulpit together. This union, however, was not to last. Whitfield, after his second visit to America, was well received by many ministers in the Northern States. Almost all these were of Calvinistic tendencies,

and asserted absolute predestination. Whitfield, being edified by their piety, began in a little while to relish their creed. They strongly recommended to him the writings of the Puritan divines, which he from that time read with much pleasure, approving almost everything they said. The consequence was that on his return to England he could not join his old friend in the work of the ministry with the same cordiality as before.

Wesley fully believed and firmly asserted that "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved;" so he had now another error to oppose. The Calvinistic sentiments had been long held by a large part of the Dissenting congregations, but did not appear for some time amongst those who were converted in the Methodist revival of religion. At last, however, they came to the front, and a breach ensued between Wesley and Whitfield.

"Having heard much," says Wesley, "of Mr. Whitfield's unkind behaviour since his return from Georgia, I went to hear him speak for himself, that I might know how to judge. I much approve of his plainness of speech. He told me 'he and I preached two different gospels, and therefore he not only would not join with or give me the right hand of fellowship, but was resolved publicly to preach against me and my brother, whenever he preached at all.' Mr. Hall, who went with me, put him in mind of the promise he had made but a few days before, that 'whatever his private opinion was he would never publicly preach against us.' He said 'that promise was only an effect of human weakness, and he was now of another mind.'"

From that time they had no close or intimate union with each other, yet it clearly appears that this circumstance gave both of them pain. They had loved long, and loved well. They were convinced of each other's sincerity. Whitfield always spoke in the most respectful terms of Wesley, while the latter, though he continued to bear the strongest testimony against absolute predestination, ever esteemed and spoke of Whitfield as a man of God and as an eminent minister of Jesus Christ.

#### WESLEY ON FREE GRACE.

In a famous sermon on Free Grace Wesley expressed himself in no uncertain fashion regarding the doctrines held by Whitfield. "It is," says Southey, "one of the most able and eloquent of all his discourses, a triumphant specimen of impassioned argument." "Call it," says Wesley,

"by whatever name you please, Election, Preterition, Predestination, or Reprobation, it comes to the same thing. The sense is plainly this: By virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible that any of the former should be damned, or that any of the latter should be saved. . . . In the cause of God, and from a sincere concern for the glory of His great name, I will mention a few of the horrible blasphemies contained in this horrible doctrine. But first I must warn every one of you that hears, as ye will answer it at the great day, not to charge me, as some have done, with blasphemy, because I mention the blasphemy of others. And the more you are grieved with them that do thus blaspheme, see that you 'confirm your love toward them' the more, and that your heart's desire and continued prayer to God be, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!'

"This premised, let it be observed that this doctrine represents our blessed Lord, 'Jesus Christ the righteous, the only-begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth,' as a hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, a man void of common sincerity. For it cannot be denied that He everywhere speaks as if He were willing that all men should be saved; therefore, to say that He was not willing that all men should be saved, is to represent Him as a mere hypocrite and dissembler. It cannot be denied that the gracious words which come out of His mouth are full of invitations to all sinners: to say then that He did not intend to save all sinners is to represent Him as a gross deceiver of the people. You cannot deny that He says, 'Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden!' If, then, you say He calls those that cannot come, those whom He can make able to come, but will not—how is it possible to describe greater insincerity? You represent Him as mocking His helpless creatures, by offering what He never intends to give. You describe Him as saying one thing and meaning another; as pretending the love which He has not. Him, in whose mouth was no guile, you make full of deceit, void of common sincerity; then, especially, when drawing nigh the city, He wept over it, and said, 'Oh, Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, and ye would not!' Now, if you say they would, but He would not, you represent Him (which who could bear?) as weeping crocodile



tears over the prey which He had doomed to destruction!

"Such blasphemy this, as, one would think, might make the ears of a Christian tingle! But there is yet more behind, for just as it honours the Son, so doth this doctrine honour the Father. It destroys all His attributes at once, it overturns His justice, mercy, and truth. Yes, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil; as more false, more cruel, and more unjust. More false, because the devil, liar as he is, hath never said he willesh all mankind to be saved; more unjust, because the devil cannot, if he would, be guilty of such injustice as you ascribe to God when you say that God condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, for continuing in sin, which, for want of that grace He will not give them, they cannot avoid; and more cruel, because that unhappy spirit seeketh rest and findeth none. So that his own restless misery is a kind of temptation to him to tempt others; but God resteth in His own high and holy place; so that to suppose Him, out of this mere motion, of His pure will and pleasure, happy as He is, to doom His creatures, whether they will or not, to endless misery, is to impute such cruelty to Him as we cannot impute to the great enemy of God and man. It is to represent the Most High God (he that hath ears to hear, let him hear!) as more cruel, false, and unjust than the devil.

"This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the horrible doctrine of predestination. And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every asserter of it. You represent God as worse than the devil; more false, more cruel, more unjust. But you say you will prove it by Scripture. Hold! What will you prove by Scripture—that God is worse than the devil? It cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it never proves this; whatever its true meaning, it can never mean this. Do you ask what is its true meaning, then? If I say I know not, you have gained nothing; for there are many Scriptures, the true sense whereof neither you nor I shall know till death is swallowed up in victory. But this I know, better it were to say it had no sense at all than to say it had such a sense as this. It cannot mean, whatever it mean beside, that the Author of truth is a liar. Let it mean what it will, it cannot mean that the Judge of all the world is unjust. No Scripture can mean that God is not love, or that His mercy is not over all His works: that is, whatever it proves beside, no Scripture can prove predestination.

"This is the blasphemy for which I abhor the

doctrine of predestination; a doctrine, upon the supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a moment—call it election, reprobation, or what you please (for it all comes to the same thing)—one might say to our adversary the devil, 'Thou fool, why dost thou prowl about any longer? Thy lying in wait for souls is as needless and as useless as our preaching. Hearest thou not that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands, and that He doth it more effectually? Thou, with all thy principalities and powers, canst only so assault that we may resist thee; but He can irresistibly destroy both body and soul in hell. Thou canst only entice; but His unchangeable decree, to leave thousands in death, compels them to continue in sin till they drop into everlasting burnings. Thou temptest; He forces us to be damned, for we cannot resist His will. Thou fool! why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom thou mayest devour? Hearest thou not that God is the devouring lion, the destroyer of souls, the murderer of men? Moloch caused only children to pass through the fire, and that fire was soon quenched; or the corruptible body, being consumed, its torments were at an end; but God, thou art told, by His eternal decree, fixed before they had done good or evil, causes not only children of a span long, but the parents also, to pass through the fire of hell,—that fire which never shall be quenched; and the body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming and never consumed; but the smoke of their torment, because it is God's good pleasure, ascendeth up for ever.'

"Oh, how would the enemy of God and men rejoice to hear these things were so! How would he cry aloud and spare not! How would he lift up his voice and say, To your tents, O Israel! Flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish. But whither will ye flee? Into heaven? He is there. Down to hell? He is there also. Ye cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty tyrant. And whether ye flee or stay, I call heaven His throne, and earth His footstool, to witness against you; ye shall perish, shall perish eternally! Sing, O hell, and rejoice, ye that are under the earth! for God, even the mighty God, hath spoken, and devoted to death thousands of souls, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Here, O Death, is thy sting! Here, O Grave, is thy victory! Nations yet unborn, or ever they have done good or evil, are doomed never to see the light of life; but thou shalt gnaw upon them for ever and ever. Let all those morning stars sing together, who fell with

Lucifer, son of the morning ! Let all the sons of hell shout for joy ; for the decree is past, and who shall annul it ? ”

#### GROWTH IN NUMBERS.

As the people who placed themselves under the care of Wesley daily increased, he was landed in a considerable difficulty ; either he must confine his labours to those whom he could visit constantly, or within a short space of time, or endeavour to procure some other assistance for them. It seems he had at first some hopes that the ministers of the respective parishes would watch over those who had lately turned from the error of their ways. In this, however, he was disappointed ; which induced him to try other methods, and at last drew forth a defence of himself which he made in the third part of his “Farther Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion.” In this appeal he says that as the clergy would not assist at all, “the expedient that remained was to find some one among themselves, who was upright of heart, and of sound judgment in the things of God, and to desire him to meet the rest as often as he would, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the ways of God, either by reading to them, or by prayer, or by exhortation.

The want of an assistant of this kind was particularly felt in London ; and as Wesley was about to leave the metropolis for a time, he appointed a young man named Maxfield to meet the Society at the usual times, to pray with them and give them such advice as might be useful. Mr. Maxfield had great abilities ; the people crowded to hear him, and by the increase of their numbers, and their earnest and deep attention, they insensibly led him to go farther than he at first intended. He began to *preach*.

Some were greatly offended at this irregularity, as it was called. A complaint was made to Wesley, and he hastened back to town to put a stop to it. His mother then lived in his house adjoining the Foundry. When he arrived, she noticed that he looked dissatisfied, and asked the cause. “Thomas Maxfield,” said he abruptly, “has turned preacher, I find.” She looked attentively at him, and replied, “John, you know what my sentiments have been. You cannot suspect me of favouring readily anything of the kind. But take care what you do with respect to that young man, for he is as surely called of God to preach as you are. Examine what have been the fruits of his preaching, and hear him also yourself.” He did so, and his prejudice gave way before the force of truth. Much the same

thing happened in other places. It appears, however, from what Wesley has said at various times, that he only submitted with reluctance to the introduction of this new element. His High Church principles stood in the way.

Wesley now visited Yorkshire ; and from that county proceeded north to Newcastle-on-Tyne, of which he says, “So much drunkenness, cursing and swearing, even from the mouths of little children, do I never remember to have seen and heard before in so small a compass of time.” Here his labours met with great success ; and after preaching, he says “the poor people were ready to tread me under foot out of pure love and kindness.”

Upon his return to the south, Wesley spent some time in and near Bristol. He then re-visited London, where he arrived about the end of July, 1742, having hastened there on account of his mother’s illness. He found her on the borders of eternity. In his Journal on the 30th of July, we read : “About three in the afternoon I went to my mother, and found her change very near. I sat down on the bedside. She was in her last conflict, unable to speak, but I believe quite sensible. Her look was calm and serene, and her eyes fixed upward while we commended her soul to God. From three to four the silver cord was loosening, and the wheel breaking at the cistern, and then, without any struggle or sigh or groan, the soul was set free. We stood around the bed and fulfilled her last request, uttered a little before she lost her speech : ‘Children, as soon as I am released, sing a psalm of praise to God.’ ”

Wesley, having now several helpers after his own heart, continued his labours with redoubled vigour. Societies were formed in many parts of England ; but, as in the beginning of Christianity, so it was now, this sect was everywhere spoken against. Not content with speaking, its enemies took at last to rioting ; stones, dirt, and rotten eggs being the common weapons of the mob. In some instances, we are told, the preachers were thrown into ponds and held under the water till they were nearly drowned. Recourse was at last had to law, but it was a considerable time before the followers of Wesley enjoyed that peace to which they had a right.

The work in England now extended with a rapidity which far exceeded the expectations of the most sanguine. For some years the preachers moved round the kingdom as Wesley thought best, from time to time, without any regular plan. But he at last found it absolutely necessary to divide the whole work into circuits, appointing so many preachers to each circuit. This plan



was attended with so many difficulties, and required so much thought, contrivance, and foresight, that he judged it expedient, to summon annually a considerable number of the preachers, to consult together concerning the affairs of the Society. The preachers thus met together, with him at their head, he called the Conference.

#### A SCHOOL ON NEW PRINCIPLES.

On the 24th of June, 1748, he opened his large school at Kingswood, near Bristol. He had long before built a small one there for the children of the colliers, but this was intended for the children of his preachers; who, being seldom at home, could not well supervise their education. This school often fell below the expectations of the founder, from the misapplication, it has been remarked, of those faculties which in other matters were his strong point. Wesley devised the discipline of the school, and ordered that each day should be divided into three parts: eight hours for sleep, from eight at night to four in the morning, eight hours for study, and eight for meals, and—play? No, John Wesley could see no use for play; amusement was proscribed at Kingswood. The hours not spent in sleep and study were to be used for prayer, self-examination, singing, working in the garden in fine and in the house in wet weather. The boys were never to be left, but were to be always under the eye of a master, who was to keep them busy and from idle talk. There were no holidays and no vacations allowed, because a week from school might undo the good habits they were forming.

It is needless to say that Kingswood school would not work, and gave Wesley endless trouble. He changed masters, and expelled some scholars for "incorrigible wickedness;" but in vain. The rules were perpetually broken; and he never appears to have had a glimpse of the fact that he was striving after the impossible. Of the nature of boyhood he had no conception, and why he could not turn out rows of juvenile Wesleys, caring for nothing but work and devotion, was by him set down to any cause but the right one.

#### AN UNFORTUNATE MARRIAGE.

In his forty-eighth year, Wesley married Mrs. Vizelle, a widow with four children and a fortune. Her money Wesley would not touch, but had it settled on herself. Some time before this he had published "Thoughts on a Single Life," in which he praised celibacy and recommended the unmarried, who found it possible, to remain as they were; alleging that he was a bachelor be-

cause he thought he could be more useful in that state.

It is to be regretted that he changed his mind and fell in love with Mrs. Vizelle. He stipulated with her that he should not preach one sermon or travel one mile the less after marriage than before; "If I thought I should," said he, "well, as I love you, I should never see your face more." With these views what could a wife be to him but an encumbrance?

At first Mrs. Wesley fell in with his ascetic habits, and travelled with him; but she soon grew tired of his rigid and restless life, and of the humble Methodist society into which she found herself thrown. She grumbled, but Wesley was far too much occupied to attend to her lamentations; then she grew jealous, played the spy, opened his letters, followed him from town to town, and plagued him in every way openly and secretly that her malice could contrive. "By her outrageous jealousy," says Southey, "she deserves to be classed in a triad with Xantippe and the wife of Job, as one of the three bad wives."

Wesley, however, was not a man to be henpecked. "Know me," he writes to her, "and know yourself. Suspect me no more, asperse me no more, provoke me no more; do not any longer contend for mastery, for power, money, or praise; be content to be a private insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. . . . Of what importance is your character to mankind? If you were buried just now, or if you had never lived, what loss would it be to the cause of God?"

After having been a thorn in his flesh for twenty years, she one day left his house, carrying off his journals and papers, which she never returned. He simply states the fact in his diary, saying he knew not what the cause had been, and adds, "Non eam reliqui, non dimisi, non revocabo—I did not forsake her, I did not dismiss her, I will not recall her."

Mrs. Wesley lived for ten years after her flight, and in 1781 died at Camberwell, where a stone in the churchyard attests that she was a woman of exemplary virtue, a tender parent, and a sincere friend, but it mercifully says nothing about her relations to her second husband.

#### DANGEROUS ILLNESS.

Up to the year 1753, Wesley had enjoyed remarkably good health, considering his great labour and exposures of every kind. He now, however, was attacked by illness, which brought him to the gates of death. After struggling some

time against it, he retired to Lewisham, near London, for the benefit of the air and gentle exercise, and from that to Bristol, where he gradually got better. It was during this illness that he wrote the following, which he ordered to be placed on his tombstone, "Here lieth the body of John Wesley, a brand picked out of the burning, who died of a consumption in the fifty-first year of his age; not leaving, after his debts are paid, ten pounds behind him, praying God to be merciful to me an unprofitable servant."

#### IN ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND.

Wesley always supposed that the design of 'Providence in raising up the Methodists so-called was "to reform the nation, especially the Church, and to spread Scriptural holiness over the land." He therefore still greatly wished that the clergy would co-operate with him, or at least favourably receive those who in their several parishes were turned from ignorance and profanity to true religion. This, however, in general was not the case. That Wesley sincerely wished to unite with every minister of the Church of England who lived and preached the Gospel is evident from his whole behaviour towards them, and from many passages in his Journals.

He could, however, afford to go on his way without their company and encouragement. The doctrines of the Bible, of the Reformation, of the Church of England were now preached in almost every part of the land. Present salvation by grace through faith, and universal obedience as the fruit thereof urged on the consciences of men, caused practical Christianity again to revive. In every county, and in most of the towns and villages of England, Societies were formed, and chapels erected for public worship.

Though now declining in the vale of years, Wesley slackened not his pace. He still rose at four in the morning, preached two, three, or four times a day, and travelled between four and five thousand miles a year, going once in two years through Great Britain and Ireland. He saw continually more and more fruit of his labours, and of the labours of those connected with him. "He laid," we are told, "no stress on opinions or modes of worship, desiring only that the love of God and man through living faith in Christ as 'God manifest in the flesh' should be the ruling principle of the life, and show itself by a uniform practice of justice, mercy, and truth. He accordingly gave the right hand of fellowship to all who walked by this rule, however they might differ from him in those speculative

points of which they are to give an account to God alone."

Wesley's first visit to Scotland was paid in 1751. Having mentioned his intention to go to that land of Calvinism to Whitfield, Whitfield said, "You have no business there; for your principles are so well known, that if you spoke like an angel none would hear you. And if they did, you would have nothing to do but to dispute with one and another from morning to night." He answered, "If God sends me, people will hear. And I will give them no provocation to dispute; for I will studiously avoid controverted points, and keep to the fundamental truths of Christianity. And if any still begin to dispute, they may; but I will not dispute with them."

He went. Hundreds and thousands flocked to hear, and he was enabled to keep his word. He avoided whatever might stir up strife, and insisted upon the grand truths—the religion of the heart, and salvation by faith at all times and in all places. And by this means he cut off all occasion of dispute. On a subsequent visit to Scotland, when in Edinburgh, finding it was the time for celebrating the Lord's Supper, he laid aside what one of his biographers calls his "last portion of bigotry," and partook of the holy ordinance at the West Kirk.

In Ireland, Wesley was listened to by great multitudes, and the cause of religion received a fresh impulse. In some respects Wesley preferred the work in Dublin even to that in London. "First," says he, "it was far greater in proportion to the time and to the number of people. Secondly, the work was more pure. There were none of the members of the Society headstrong or unadvisable, none that were wiser than their teachers, none who dreamed of being immortal or infallibly incapable of temptation; in short, there were no whimsical or enthusiastic persons. All were calm and sober-minded." This was not the case in the great metropolis, where there had shortly before been a split in the Society, Wesley declaring that, "the reproach of Christ I am willing to bear, but not the reproach of enthusiasm if I can help it."

#### THE APPROACHING END.

On his birthday in 1788 he observes, "I this day enter on my eighty-sixth year. And what cause have I to praise God as for a thousand spiritual blessings, so for bodily blessings also! How little have I suffered yet by 'the rust of numerous years!'" It had been reported that Charles Wesley had said a little before he died, that



his brother would not outlive him a year. Wesley did not pay much attention to this, but he seemed to think that, considering his years, such an event was highly probable. Yet he made not the least alteration in his manner of living or in his labours.

At the middle of 1790 he closed his cash-book with these words penned in a tremulous hand: "For upwards of seventy-six years I have kept my accounts exactly; I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied that I save all I can, and give all I can; that is, all I have." This was strictly true. From his youth up he had lived on a trifle yearly, and given the balance of his income away. When at Oxford he had £30 one year, he lived on £28, and gave £2 away. Next year, having £60, he lived on £28, and gave away £32. The third year he had £90, and the fourth £120, yet he still limited himself to £28, and made alms of the rest. It is said that during the course of his life he gave away no less than £30,000. This great sum was chiefly derived from the sale of his writings. He was his own printer and bookseller, and managed his trade with economy and success.

#### WESLEY'S DEATH.

The end of all his labours now quickly approached. On Thursday, 17th of February, 1791, he preached at Lambeth. When he came home he seemed not to be well; and being asked how he did, he said he believed he had caught cold. A few days later he took to bed; and on Wednesday morning, the 2nd of March, came the closing scene. One of his friends prayed with him; and the last word he was heard to articulate was "Farewell!" A few minutes before ten, while several of his friends were kneeling around his bed, without a groan this man of God, this beloved pastor of thousands, entered into the joy of his Lord.

#### WESLEY'S WORK AND CHARACTER.

"Marvellous," says Dr. Robert Chambers, "were Wesley's powers as a leader and administrator. Never general drilled a more heterogeneous army, and never was general more reverentially obeyed. He exacted no service which he did not in his own person exceed. Who could work more than he worked? who spare himself less? His example gave life and inspiration to all who came near him. His strong will and his quick, decisive intellect naturally raised him to kingship, and gathered around him willing and joyful subjects. The constructive force and order of his own mind were reflected in the organization

of Methodism; and in the increase and permanence of that community we discern the highest testimony to the vigour and sagacity of his character."

It would be difficult to find in the whole circle of biography a man who worked harder and longer than John Wesley. Not an hour did he leave unappropriated. For fifty years he rose at four in the morning, summer and winter, and was accustomed to preach a sermon at five, an exercise he esteemed "the healthiest in the world." "This early devotion," he said, "is the glory of the Methodists. Whenever they drop it, they will dwindle away to nothing."

Travelling did not suspend his industry. "Though I am always in haste," he says of himself, "I am never in a hurry, because I never undertake any more work than I can go through with perfect calmness of spirit. It is true I travel four thousand or five thousand miles in a year, but I generally travel alone in my carriage, and am as retired ten hours a day as if I were in a wilderness. On other days I never spend less than three hours, and frequently ten or twelve, alone." In this way he found time to read much and to write voluminously.

In eating and drinking he was very abstemious. Supper he abhorred, and sometimes for years he never tasted animal food. Once, for three or four years, he lived almost exclusively on potatoes. From wine, beer, and spirits he habitually abstained, preferring water.

Throughout his long life he enjoyed almost uninterrupted health. He could sleep at will, and he owns that he never lost a night's sleep from his childhood. He attributed his fine health to his regular habits, his temperance, and to the frequent changes of air he experienced in his travels, also to his serene temper; a thousand cares lay on his shoulders, but they never worried him. "I feel and grieve," he writes, "but by the grace of God I fret at nothing." To the end of his days his complexion was fresh, his walk agile, his eye keen and active. A curious and agreeable picture he left in the memory of many who saw him moving about in his old age, and took note of his lithe little figure, his long hair, white and bright as silver, his radiant countenance, his active step and energetic air.

His publications are far too numerous for us to attempt any account or even an enumeration of them: among the most remarkable, besides his *Journal*, are—A corrected translation of *Thomas-a-Kempis*, said to have been published by him in 1735, a short time before his departure for America; various collections of hymns, most

of which, however, were written by his brother Charles; a History of England; a short Roman History; "Primitive Physic;" and many short tracts on theological subjects.

#### THE DOCTRINES OF WESLEYAN-METHODISM.

On the fundamental points, such as the divinity of Jesus Christ, His atoning sacrifice for sin, the inspiration and authenticity of the Scriptures, the future life as a state of rewards and punishments, the Methodists hold views in nowise differing from those held by all Evangelical Protestants. So far as their views are peculiar to themselves, they were thus embodied by John Wesley:—

"The justification whereof our articles and homilies speak, means present forgiveness, pardon of sins, and consequently acceptance with God. I believe the condition of this is faith; I mean, not only that without faith we cannot be justified, but also that as soon as any one has true faith, in that moment he is justified. Good works follow this faith, but cannot go before it; much less can sanctification, which implies a continuous course of good works springing from holiness of heart.

"Repentance must go before faith, and fruits meet for it if there be opportunity. By repentance I mean conviction of sin, producing real desires, and sincere resolutions of amendment; and by fruits meet for repentance, I mean forgiving our brother, ceasing from evil and doing good, using the ordinances of God, and in general obeying Him according to the measure of grace that we have received. But these I cannot as yet term good works, because they do not spring from faith and the love of God.

"By salvation I mean, not barely deliverance from hell, or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin, a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness, in justice, mercy, and truth. This implies all holy and heavenly tempers, and, by consequence, all holiness of conversation.

"Faith is the sole condition of this salvation. Without faith we cannot thus be saved; for we cannot rightly serve God unless we love Him, and we cannot love Him unless we know Him; neither can we know Him unless by faith.

"Faith in general is a Divine, supernatural evidence or conviction of things not seen; that is, of things past, future, or spiritual. Justifying faith implies not only a Divine evidence or conviction that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins, that He

loved me and gave Himself for me; and the moment a penitent sinner believes this, God pardons and absolves him; and as soon as his pardon or justification is witnessed to him by the Holy Ghost, he is saved. He loves God and all mankind; he has the mind that was in Christ, and power to walk as He also walked. From that time (unless he makes shipwreck of the faith) salvation gradually increases in his soul.

"The Author of faith and salvation is God alone. He is the sole Giver of every good gift, and the sole Author of every good work. There is no more of power than of merit in man, but as all the merit is in the Son of God, in what He has done and suffered for us, so all power is in the Spirit of God; and therefore every man, in order to believe unto salvation, must receive the Holy Ghost. This is essentially necessary to every Christian, in order to faith, peace, joy, and love. Whoever has these fruits of the Spirit, cannot but know and feel that God has wrought them in his heart."

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF WESLEYAN-METHODISM.

Wesley sub-divided the Methodist Societies into Classes, each Class containing about a dozen persons under the direction of a Class-leader, who has to see each person in his Class once a week, to inquire how their souls prosper, and to encourage, comfort, or censure, as the case may be; to collect the voluntary contributions of his Class, and pay them over to the stewards of the Society; and to give the ministers all necessary information regarding the spiritual and bodily condition of those under his leadership.

The churches are united into circuits, and to these circuits two, three, or four ministers are appointed, one of whom is styled the Superintendent. Every quarter the Classes are visited by the ministers, who make it a point to converse personally with every member; at the termination of which proceeding a circuit meeting is held, composed of ministers, stewards, leaders of classes, lay preachers, etc. Still larger associations are the Districts, composed of from ten to twenty circuits, the ministers of which meet annually for ecclesiastical purposes. The highest Ecclesiastical Court is the Conference, held annually; at which ministers are admitted and ordained, cases of discipline are examined, the ministers are appointed to the circuits in which they are to labour during the following year, officers and committees are appointed, and all business transacted that relates to the general interests of the body.

I. S. A.



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Yours, &c., C. N. BARTLET.

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. . . . I was a complete cripple for over fifteen months with Rheumatism in my hips, but now (by use of the Oil) I am as well as ever I was . . . and can walk without any pain whatever.  
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Sir, . . . After rubbing my hands and arms for three days the pain left me altogether, and has not returned. I send you—as a present, &c.  
Yours, &c., G. N. W.

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Sir, . . . Thanks for sending the Oils. . . . I am as clear of pain as when a boy, after being six years disabled . . . by Rheumatic in the hips; I can work now as well as ever. I send you this to show what a cure it has effected on me.  
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J. H. ADAMS, Swansea.

Capt. DUNN, Leeds, Yorks, October 10th, 1878.  
Sir,—I am thankful for the bottle of Oils I had of you to rub my back, as I could not move for the Lumbago. I am as well as ever I was, and can follow my work, &c.  
Yours, &c., JOHN ANDREWS.

Mr. DUNN has now arranged to supply these Oils under the name of RHEUMATINE (which name and Trade Mark have been duly registered), through all respectable Chemists, and Wholesale only through Messrs. SANGER & SONS, 252, Oxford Street, London.

The Prices now are 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 11s.; but to enable the suffering and dubious to test its merits, small Sample Bottle, 1s. 1½d., can also be had.

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Makes delicious Blanc-manges in a few minutes. In Boxes, 6d. and 1s. each.

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REMOVE THE CAUSE AND THE EFFECTS WILL CEASE.

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The Best Pills in the World for the Liver and Kidneys.

The Best Pills in the World for Ladies' Use.

THESE PILLS are Invaluable. They are the Best Medicine ever offered to the public as a certain and effectual cure for the Lumbago and Liver, and for all Disorders of the Kidneys they are unequalled. One box will almost invariably cure the most severe attack of Lumbago; some may require two, but most cases are cured with even half a box. These Pills, although so efficacious, are in their operation very mild, and do not in the least disorder the Stomach or Bowels, nor unfit anyone for exercise or travelling. One 1s. 1½d. box as a trial will be quite sufficient to convince the most incredulous that every word said about them is true. Sold in Boxes at 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 6d., and 11s. each, by all Chemists and Patent Medicine Vendors; or sent to any address for 15, 36, or 6 Stamps, by the Proprietors, GOODALL, BACKHOUSE & CO., Leeds, who have purchased the Recipe and sole right to their manufacture from the widow of the late WILLIAM KABERRY, Patele Bridge. London Agents: BARCLAY & SONS, W. EDWARDS & SON, SANGER & SONS, and W. SUTTON & Co.



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